Post Office Curtails Evening Mail Pickups

It may look like a cutback in service, but the Post Office says it's all in the interest of expediting the mails.

A Department spokesman confirmed yesterday that the Post Office has been eliminating 8 p.m. pickups from mailboxes on Washington's side streets since last fall.

It isn't a cutback, he says, but rather part of a concerted effort to get mail out of Washington and into New York and Boston the day after it is posted.

The idea is this: The last citywide collection is now at 5 p.m. in two thirds of the city's side streets and will be in all its side streets before long. After 5, the Post Office makes an extra effort, by using more manpower, to get the mail sorted and on late trains out of the city.

"We were especially concerned about mail to New York and Boston," a Department spokesman said, "since it makes up such a large part of our work. What we are trying to do is make sure that letters mailed before 5 p.m. are delivered the next day in those two cities."

The spokesman said the Department has not been able to determine yet if the procedure is working. Similar steps are being taken in other cities across the Nation.

The Post Office will continue to make 8 p.m. pickups from mailboxes along major streets, the spokesman said.